

Platform of the Communist International

Third (Communist) International, First Congress

Moscow, March 2–6, 1919

The contradictions of the capitalist world system, which were hidden deep within it, have burst forth with tremendous force in a single huge explosion—the great imperialist world war.

Capitalism tried to overcome its own anarchic nature by organizing production. Instead of numerous enterprise-owners competing with one another, powerful associations of capitalists (syndicates, cartels, trusts) were created; banking capital united with industrial capital; economic life as a whole came under the influence of the finance-capital oligarchy, its power and its organization giving it exclusive dominance. Free competition gave way to monopoly. The individual capitalist was transformed into a member of a capitalist association. Organization took the place of reckless anarchy.

But, while in each individual country the anarchy of the capitalist mode of production gave way to capitalist organization, at the level of the world economy, the anarchy, the competition, and the contradictions intensified. The struggle between the largest and most organized exploiting states led, with iron necessity, to the horrors of the imperialist world war. Greed for profit drove world capital to fight for new markets, new spheres of investment, new sources of raw material, and the cheap labor-power of the colonial slaves. The imperialist states which divided the whole world between them, turning many millions of African, Asian, Australian, and American proletarians and peasants into beasts of burden, had to, sooner or later, discover the real, anarchic nature of capital in a full-scale conflict. This was how the greatest crime of all—the murderous world war—came about.

Capitalism also tried to overcome the contradictions of its social structure. Bourgeois society is a class society. Capital in the great "civilized" powers wanted to veil its social contradictions. By plundering the colonial peoples, capital was able to buy off its own hired slaves. It created a community of interest between the exploiters and the exploited at the expense of the oppressed colonies—of their yellow, black, and red-skinned populations. In this way, the European and American working classes were tied to their imperialist "fatherlands".

But when war came, this method of bribery, previously securing the patriotism of the working class and its spiritual servitude, had the opposite effect. Peace between classes was finally paid for by physical annihilation, the complete enslavement of the proletariat, terrible repression, impoverishment and physical degeneration and world famine. Civil peace was shattered. The imperialist war turned into a civil war.

A new system has been born. Ours is the epoch of the breakdown of capital, its internal disintegration, the epoch of the communist revolution of the proletariat.

The imperialist system is collapsing. There is unrest in the colonies and among the small nations which have recently gained independence. This is a time of proletarian uprisings, and of triumphant proletarian revolutions in some countries. The imperialist armies are demoralized, the ruling classes are completely incapable of continuing to govern. Such is the present state of affairs throughout the world.

Human culture has been destroyed and humanity is threatened with complete annihilation.

There is only one force able to save humanity and that is the proletariat. The old capitalist "order" has ceased to function; its further existence is out of the question. The final outcome of the capitalist mode of production is chaos. This chaos can only be overcome by the productive and most numerous class—the working class. The proletariat has to establish real order—communist order. It must break the rule of capital, make wars impossible, abolish the frontiers between states, transform the whole world into a community where all work for the common good, and realize the freedom and brotherhood of peoples.

World capital, on the other hand, is preparing for the final battle. Behind the cover of its "League of Nations" and pacifist chatter, it is making a last attempt to piece together the capitalist system now in the process of spontaneous disintegration and to direct its energies against the steady advance of the proletarian revolution.

The proletariat must reply to this new and gigantic conspiracy of the capitalist classes with the seizure of political power. The workers must use this power as a weapon against their class enemies and as a lever to effect the economic reconstruction of society. The final victory of the world proletariat signifies the beginning of the real history of human liberation.

The Conquest of Political Power

The conquest of political power by the proletariat means the destruction of the political power of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois state apparatus with its capitalist army commanded by the bourgeois-Junker officers, with its police and gendarmerie, its jailers and judges, its priests and civil servants is the strongest weapon the bourgeoisie possesses. The capture of state power must not mean simply a change of personnel in the ministries, but the elimination of the hostile state apparatus, the concentration of real power in the hands of the proletariat, the disarming of the bourgeoisie, the counter-revolutionary officers, and the White Guard, and the arming of the proletariat, the revolutionary soldiers and the Red Workers' Guard; the removal of all bourgeois judges and the

organization of a proletarian court; the abolition of the rule of the reactionary civil service and the creation of new proletarian organs of administration. The victory of the proletariat is guaranteed by the disruption of the enemy's power and the organization of proletarian power. The bourgeois state apparatus has to be shattered and a proletarian state machine constructed. Only when the proletariat has finally broken the resistance of the bourgeoisie and is clearly the victor can former opponents be gradually brought under control and made to contribute to the construction of communist society.

Democracy and Dictatorship

The proletarian state is, like every other state, an apparatus of repression, but its repression is directed against the enemies of the working class. Its purpose is to break, once and for all, the resistance of the exploiters, who will stop at nothing in their desperate struggle to drown the revolution in rivers of blood. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which gives this class the leading position in society, is, however, a temporary form of government. As the resistance of the bourgeoisie is overcome, its property expropriated, and its members gradually drawn into working for society, so the proletarian dictatorship disappears, the state withers away, and the division of society into classes is ended.

So-called democracy, i.e. bourgeois democracy, is nothing but the veiled dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The much-vaunted "general win of the people" is no more a reality than "the people" or "the nation". Classes exist and they have conflicting and incompatible aspirations. But as the bourgeoisie represents an insignificant minority it makes use of this illusion, this imaginary concept, in order to consolidate its rule over the working class. Behind this mask of eloquence it can impose its class will. The proletariat, which forms the vast majority of the population is, on the contrary, completely open about using the class power of its mass organizations and Soviets to eliminate the privileges of the bourgeoisie and guarantee the transition to the classless, communist society.

Bourgeois democracy consists essentially of a purely rhetorical and formal recognition of rights and freedoms, which are in fact inaccessible to the working people—the proletariat and semi-proletarian elements—on account of their lack of material means. The bourgeoisie at the same time has every opportunity to use its material means, its press, and organization to cheat and deceive the people. However, the new type of state power, known as the Soviet system, ensures the proletariat at the opportunity of guaranteeing its rights and freedom in practice. Soviet power provides the people with the best palaces, houses, printing works, stocks of paper, etc. for their press, and clubs for their meetings. Only such measures make proletarian democracy really possible.

It is only on paper that bourgeois democracy and its parliamentary system give the masses the opportunity to participate in the running of the state. In actual fact, the masses and their organizations have absolutely no access to real power and are denied any genuine participation in the state administration. Under the soviet system, it is the mass organizations, and through them the masses themselves, that are running things, inasmuch as the soviets attract an ever-increasing number of workers into government. This is the only way the entire working population can gradually be drawn into the work of state administration. The Soviet system is thus based on the mass organizations of the proletariat, on the soviets themselves, the revolutionary trade unions, the cooperatives, etc.

The separation of legislative and executive power and the absence of the right of recall, characteristic of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarianism, widen the gulf between the masses and the state. The Soviet system, with its right of recall, the combination of legislative and executive power, and the consequent position of the soviets as working bodies, is able to link the masses with the administrative organs. This link is further strengthened by the electoral system, which is based on production units rather than artificial territorial constituencies.

Thus the Soviet system makes possible genuine proletarian democracy—a democracy for the pro-

letariat, by the proletariat, and against the bourgeoisie. In this system the industrial proletariat is guaranteed a privileged position as the leading, best organized, and politically most mature class, under whose hegemony the level of the semi-proletarian elements and the poorer peasants in the rural areas is gradually raised. The industrial proletariat must use its temporary privileges to free the poorer petty-bourgeois masses in the countryside from the influence of the rural *kulaks* [wealthier peasants who exploit hired labor-power] and bourgeoisie, to organize, and draw them to the cause of communist construction.

The Expropriation of the Bourgeoisie and the Socialization of Production

Given the dissolution of the capitalist system and capitalist labor discipline, and the present state of relations between classes, the re-construction of the economy on the old basis is impossible. Workers' struggles for wage increases, even where successful, do not result in the anticipated rise in living standards, because the rising prices on all consumer goods cancel out any gains. The living conditions of workers can only be improved when production is administered by the proletariat instead of the bourgeoisie. In countries where the crisis situation is clearly insurmountable, the militant fight for better wages inevitably develops into a bitter struggle which tends to escalate. The continued existence of the capitalist system is consequently impossible. Before the productive forces of the economy can be raised the resistance of the bourgeoisie has to be broken. This must be done as swiftly as possible, since bourgeois rule prolongs the death agony of the old society, creating the danger of the complete destruction of economic life. The proletarian dictatorship must expropriate the big bourgeoisie and landowners and make the means of production and exchange the common property of the proletarian state.

Communism is now rising from the ruins of the capitalist system; this new system is the only way out of the historic crisis that faces humanity. Opportunists who put forward the utopian demand

for the reconstruction of the capitalist economic system in order to defer socialization, only postpone a resolution of the crisis, and create the possibility of utter ruin. Communist revolution is the best—is indeed the only possible—means by which society's truly productive force, the proletariat, and society itself can be saved.

Proletarian dictatorship does not involve any sharing out of the means of production and exchange. On the contrary, the greatest possible centralization of the productive forces and the subordination of all production to a single plan is the aim.

The first steps towards the socialization of the whole economy include: the socialization of the apparatus of those big banks at present controlling production; the seizure of all the economic institutions of the capitalist state by bringing them under the control of proletarian state power; the nationalization of all industries organized in syndicates and trusts, and of those branches of industry in which the concentration and centralization of capital makes nationalization technically possible; and the nationalization of agricultural estates and their transformation into publicly-managed agricultural units.

As regards the smaller holdings, the proletariat must gradually amalgamate them in ways appropriate to their size.

It must be emphasized that small properties will not be expropriated and force will not be used against small property-owners who do not exploit hired labor. This layer must be drawn into the sphere of socialist organization gradually. Example and practice will show them the advantage of the new system, which frees the small peasant from the economic yoke of the *kulaks* and the landowners, and the urban petty bourgeoisie from the weight of taxes (the cancellation of state debts is an important measure in this connection) etc.

In the economic sphere, the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship can be carried out only to the extent that the proletariat is able to create centralized organs for the management of production and to introduce workers' management. In its attempt to achieve this goal, the proletariat will have

to make use of those mass organizations which are most closely connected with the production process.

In the sphere of distribution, the proletarian dictatorship must replace trading by a fair distribution of products. Measures necessary to this end include the following: the socialization of large commercial enterprises, the transfer of all bourgeois state and municipal organs of distribution to the proletariat, introducing control over large co-operative associations, whose organizational apparatus will still have a big economic significance in the transitional period; the gradual centralization of all these organs and their transformation into a single system, responsible for the rational distribution of products.

In the sphere of distribution, as in that of production, qualified technicians and specialists are to be used once their political resistance has been broken and they prove themselves prepared to work with the new system of production instead of capital.

The proletariat has no intention of oppressing these people—on the contrary, it will give them, for the first time, the opportunity to develop their creative energies. Under the proletarian dictatorship, the separation of physical and mental labor, characteristic of capitalism, will be superseded by their integration, and in this way labor and science will be unified. Besides the expropriation of factories, mines, estates, etc., the proletariat must also put an end to the exploitation of the population by capitalist landlords, placing the large houses in the hands of the local soviets, moving workers into the apartments of the bourgeoisie, etc.

In the course of effecting these great changes, Soviet power must steadily build up a huge administrative apparatus and centralize its organization, and, at the same time, draw increasing layers of the working people into direct administrative work.

The Road to Victory

The revolutionary epoch demands that the proletariat use methods of struggle capable of focus-

ing its militancy—namely, methods of mass struggle which lead logically to direct confrontation and open battle with the bourgeois state machine. All other methods, including the revolutionary utilization of the bourgeois parliament, must be subordinated to this aim.

An essential condition of victory in this struggle is that the proletariat make a break not only with the outright lackeys of capital and the hangers-on of the communist revolution, such as the right-wing social democrats, but also with the "center" (the Kautskyites), which abandons the proletariat at the critical moment to compromise with its avowed enemies.

It is vital at the same time to form a bloc with members of the revolutionary workers' movement—certain syndicalist elements, for example—who, in spite of the fact that they did not earlier belong to the socialist party, have more or less accepted the platform of the proletarian dictatorship through soviets.

There are several factors which make the creation of a truly revolutionary and proletarian Communist International essential: the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries, the danger that the revolution will be suppressed by an alliance of the capitalist states, the attempts by the parties of the social-traitors to unify their ranks (the establishment of the scab "International" in Berne is an example) and so better serve Wilson's League of Nations and finally, the absolute necessity of co-ordinating proletarian action.

Only an International, capable of subordinating so-called national interests to the interests of international revolution, will organize aid on an international scale, for without economic and other kinds of mutual support the proletariat is not in a position to build a new society. Unlike the scab socialist International, the International of the communist proletariat will support the exploited peoples of the colonies in their struggle with the imperialists, in the knowledge that this action will promote the final collapse of the world imperialist system.

At the outbreak of the world war, the capitalist criminals maintained that they were concerned only with the defense of their fatherland. It was not long, however, before German imperialism showed its brutal nature in a series of bloody actions in Russia, the Ukraine, and Finland. Now it is the Entente powers who are being exposed, even in the eyes of the most backward layers of the population, as international robbers and murderers of the proletariat. Together with the German bourgeoisie and the social patriots, and with hypocritical phrases about peace on their lips, they use their tanks and brutalized, barbaric colonial troops in an attempt to crush the revolution of the European proletariat. The White Terror unleashed by the bourgeois cannibals is indescribable. Its victims in the working class are innumerable. The bravest fighters, including Liebknecht and Luxemburg, have been lost.

The proletariat must defend itself at all costs. The Communist International calls the whole world proletariat to the last fight. We must meet arms with arms, force with force.

Down with the Imperialist Conspiracy of Capital!

Long Live the International Republic of Proletarian Soviets!

Manifesto of the First Congress of the Communist International to the World Proletariat

Seventy-two years ago the Communist Party proclaimed its program to the world in the form of a *Manifesto* written by the greatest heralds of the proletarian revolution, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Even at that time, Communism no sooner entered the arena of struggle than it was beset by baiting, lies, hatred, and persecution of the possessing classes who rightfully sensed their mortal enemy in Communism. The development of Communism during this three-quarters of a century proceeded along complex paths: side by side with periods of stormy upsurge, it knew periods of decline; side by side with successes—cruel defeats. But essentially the movement proceeded along the path indicated in advance by the *Communist Manifesto*. The epoch of final, decisive struggle has come later than the apostles of the socialist revolution had expected and hoped. But it has come. We Communists, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat of the various countries of Europe, America, and Asia who have gathered in Soviet Moscow, feel and consider ourselves to be the heirs and consummators of the cause whose program was affirmed 72 years ago. Our task is to generalize the revolutionary experience of the working class, to purge the movement of the corroding admixture of opportunism and social-patriotism, to unify the efforts of all genuinely revolutionary parties of the world proletariat and thereby facilitate and hasten the victory of the Communist revolution throughout the world.

Today when Europe is covered with debris and smoking ruins, the worst pyromaniacs in history are busy seeking out the criminals responsible for the war. In their wake follow their servants—professors, members of parliament, journalists, social-

patriots, and other political pimps of the bourgeoisie.

For many years the Socialist movement predicted the inevitability of the imperialist war, seeing its causes in the insatiable greed of the property-owning classes of the two chief camps and, generally, of all capitalist countries. At the Basle Congress, two years before the war exploded, the responsible Socialist leaders of all countries branded imperialism as bearing the guilt for the impending war, and threatened the bourgeoisie with the socialist revolution which would descend upon the bourgeoisie's head as the proletarian retribution for the crimes of militarism. Today after the experience of the last five years, after history, having laid bare the predatory appetites of Germany, is unmasking the no less criminal acts of the Allies, the state-Socialists of the Entente countries continue in the wake of their respective governments to discover the war criminal in the person of the overthrown German Kaiser. On top of this, the German social-patriots who in August 1914 proclaimed Hohenzollern's diplomatic *White Book* to be the holiest evangel of the peoples are nowadays following in the footsteps of the Entente Socialists and are with vile subservience indicting the overthrown German monarchy, which they had so slavishly served, as the chief war criminal. They thus hope to obscure their own role and at the same time to worm their way into the good graces of the conquerors. But in the light of unfolding events and diplomatic revelations, side by side with the role of the toppled dynasties—the Romanovs, the Hohenzollerns, and the Habsburgs—and of the capitalist cliques of these countries, the role of the ruling classes of

France, England, Italy, and the United States stands out in all its boundless criminality.

English diplomacy did not lift its visor of secrecy up to the very outbreak of war. The government of the City [London financial district—Editor's Note] obviously feared to reveal its intention of entering the war on the side of the Entente lest the Berlin government take fright and be compelled to eschew war. In London they wanted war. That is why they conducted themselves in such a way as to raise hopes in Berlin and Vienna that England would remain neutral, while Paris and Petrograd firmly counted on England's intervention.

Prepared by the entire course of development over a number of decades, the war was unleashed through the direct and conscious provocation of Great Britain. The British government thereby calculated on extending just enough aid to Russia and France, while they became exhausted, to exhaust England's mortal enemy, Germany. But the might of German militarism proved far too formidable and demanded of England not token, but actual intervention in the war. The role of a gleeful third partner to which Great Britain, following her ancient tradition, aspired, fell to the lot of the United States.

The Washington government became all the more easily reconciled to the English blockade which one-sidedly restricted American stock market speculation in European blood, because the countries of the Entente reimbursed the American bourgeoisie with lush profits for violations of "international law." However, the Washington government was likewise constrained by the enormous military superiority of Germany to drop its fictitious neutrality. In relation to Europe as a whole, the United States assumed the role which England had taken in previous wars and which she tried to take in the last war in relation to the continent, namely: weakening one camp by playing it against another, intervening in military operations only to such an extent as to guarantee her all the advantages of the situation. According to American standards of gambling, Wilson's stake

was not very high, but it was the final stake, and consequently assured his winning the prize.

As a result of the war, the contradictions of the capitalist system confronted mankind in the shape of pangs of hunger, exhaustion from cold, epidemics, and moral savagery. This settled once and for all the academic controversy within the Socialist movement over the theory of impoverishment and the gradual transition from capitalism to socialism. Statisticians and pedants of the theory that contradictions were being blunted had for decades fished out from all the corners of the globe real or mythical facts testifying to the rising well-being of various groups and categories of the working class. The theory of mass impoverishment was regarded as buried, amid contemptuous jeers from the eunuchs of bourgeois professordom and mandarins of Socialist opportunism. At the present time this impoverishment, no longer only of a social but also of a physiological and biological kind, rises before us in all its shocking reality.

The catastrophe of the imperialist war has completely swept away all the conquests of trade-union and parliamentary struggles. For this war itself was just as much a product of the internal tendencies of capitalism as were those economic agreements and parliamentary compromises which the war buried in blood and muck.

Finance capital, which plunged mankind into the abyss of war, itself underwent a catastrophic change in the course of this war. The dependency of paper money upon the material foundation of production has been completely disrupted. Progressively losing its significance as the means and regulator of capitalist commodity circulation, paper money became transformed into an instrument of requisition, of seizure, and military-economic violence in general. The debasement of paper money reflects the general mortal crisis of capitalist commodity circulation. During the decades preceding the war, free competition, as the regulator of production and distribution, had already been thrust aside in the main fields of economic life by the system of trusts and monopolies; during the course of the war the regulating-directing role was torn from the hands of these

economic groups and transferred directly into the hands of military state power. The distribution of raw materials, the utilization of Baku or Rumanian oil, Donbas coal, Ukrainian wheat, the fate of German locomotives, freight cars and automobiles, the rationing of relief for starving Europe—all these fundamental questions of the world's economic life are not being regulated by free competition, nor by associations of national and international trusts and consortiums, but by the direct application of military force, for the sake of its continued preservation. If the complete subjection of the state power to the power of finance capital had led mankind into the imperialist slaughter, then through this slaughter finance capital has succeeded in completely militarizing not only the state but also itself; and it is no longer capable of fulfilling its basic economic functions otherwise than by means of blood and iron.

The opportunists, who before the World War summoned the workers to practice moderation for the sake of gradual transition to socialism, and who during the war demanded class docility in the name of civil peace and national defense, are again demanding self-renunciation of the proletariat—this time for the purpose of overcoming the terrible consequences of the war. If these preachments were to find acceptance among the working masses, capitalist development in new, much more concentrated and monstrous forms would be restored on the bones of several generations—with the perspective of a new and inevitable world war. Fortunately for mankind this is not possible.

State control of economic life, against which capitalist liberalism used to protest so much, has become an accomplished fact. There is no turning back from this fact—it is impossible to return not only to free competition but even to the domination of trusts, syndicates and other economic octopuses. Today the one and only issue is: Who shall henceforth be the bearer of nationalized production—the imperialist state or the state of the victorious proletariat?

In other words: Is all toiling mankind to become the bond slaves of victorious world cliques

who, under the firm-name of the League of Nations and aided by an "international" army and "international" navy, will here plunder and strangle some peoples and there cast crumbs to others, while everywhere and always shackling the proletariat—with the sole object of maintaining their own rule? Or shall the working class of Europe and of the advanced countries in other parts of the world take in hand the disrupted and ruined economy in order to assure its regeneration upon socialist principles?

It is possible to shorten the epoch of crisis through which we are living only by measures of the proletarian dictatorship which does not look back to the past, which respects neither inherited privileges nor property rights, which takes as its starting point the need of saving the starving masses; and to this end mobilizes all forces and resources, introduces universal labor conscription, establishes the regime of labor discipline in order in the course of a few years, not only to thus heal the gaping wounds inflicted by war, but also to raise mankind to new and unprecedented heights.

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The national state, which gave a mighty impulsion to capitalist development, has become too narrow for the further development of productive forces. This renders all the more precarious the position of small states, hemmed in by the major powers of Europe and scattered through other sections of the world. These small states, which have arisen at different times as fragments chipped from bigger ones, as so much small change in payment for various services rendered and as strategic buffers, retain their own dynasties, their own ruling cliques, their own imperialist pretensions, their own diplomatic intrigues. Prior to the war, their phantom independence rested on the same foundations as the equilibrium of Europe—the uninterrupted antagonism between the two imperialist camps. The war has disrupted this equilibrium. By giving at first an enormous preponderance to Germany, the war compelled the small states to seek their salvation under the magnanimous wings of German militarism. After

Germany was crushed, the bourgeoisie of the small states, together with their respective patriotic "Socialists," turned their faces to the victorious Allied imperialism, and began seeking guarantees for their continued independent existence in the hypocritical points of the Wilsonian program. At the same time, the number of small states has increased—out of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, out of portions of the former Czarist empire, new states have been carved, which were no sooner born than they flung themselves at one another's throats over the question of state boundaries. The Allied imperialists are meanwhile preparing such combinations of small powers, both old and new, as would be bound to themselves through the hold of mutual hatreds and common impotence. While oppressing and violating the small and weak peoples, while dooming them to starvation and destruction, the Allied imperialists, like the imperialists of the Central Empire a brief while ago, do not stop talking about the right of self-determination, which is today being trampled underfoot in Europe as in all other parts of the world.

The small peoples can be assured the opportunity of free existence only by the proletarian revolution, which will free the productive forces of all countries from the tentacles of the national states, unifying the peoples in closest economic collaboration on the basis of a common economic plan, and offering the weakest and smallest people an opportunity of freely and independently directing their national cultural affairs without any detriment to the unified and centralized European and world economy.

The last war, which was by and large a war for colonies, was at the same time a war conducted with the help of colonies. The colonial populations were drawn into the European war on an unprecedented scale. Indians, Negroes, Arabs, and Madagascans fought on the territories of Europe—for the sake of what? For the sake of their right to continue to remain the slaves of England and France. Never before has the infamy of capitalist rule in the colonies been delineated so clear-

ly; never before has the problem of colonial slavery been posed so sharply as it is today.

A number of open insurrections and the revolutionary ferment in all the colonies have hence arisen. In Europe itself, Ireland keeps signaling through sanguinary street battles that she still remains and still feels herself to be an enslaved country. In Madagascar, Annam, and elsewhere the troops of the bourgeois republic have more than once quelled the uprisings of colonial slaves during the war. In India the revolutionary movement has not subsided for a single day, and has recently led to the greatest labor strikes in Asia, which the English government has met by ordering its armored cars into action in Bombay.

The colonial question has been thus posed in its fullest measure, not only on the maps at the diplomatic congress in Paris, but also within the colonies themselves. At best, Wilson's program has as its task: to effect a change of labels with regard to colonial slavery. The emancipation of the colonies is conceivable only in conjunction with the emancipation of the working class in the metropolises. The workers and peasants not only of Annam, Algiers, and Bengal, but also of Persia and Armenia, will gain their opportunity of independent existence only in that hour when the workers of England and France, having overthrown Lloyd George and Clemenceau, will have taken state power into their own hands. Even now the struggle in the more developed colonies, while taking place only under the banner of national liberation, immediately assumes a more or less clearly defined social character. If capitalist Europe has violently dragged the most backward sections of the world into the whirlpool of capitalist relations, then socialist Europe will come to the aid of liberated colonies with her technology, her organization, and her ideological influence in order to facilitate their transition to a planned and organized socialist economy.

Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! The hour of proletarian dictatorship in Europe will strike for you as the hour of your own emancipation!

The entire bourgeois world accuses the Communists of destroying freedom and political

democracy. These are lies. Upon assuming power, the proletariat merely lays bare the complete impossibility of employing the methods of bourgeois democracy, and creates the conditions and forms of a new, much higher workers' democracy. The whole course of capitalist development, especially during its final imperialist epoch, has acted to undermine political democracy not only by dividing nations into two irreconcilably hostile classes, but also by condemning numerous petty-bourgeois and proletarian layers, as well as the most disinherited lowest strata of the proletariat, to economic debilitation and political impotence.

In those countries where historical development provided the opportunity, the working class has utilized the regime of political democracy in order to organize against capitalism. The same thing will likewise take place in the future in those countries where conditions for the proletarian revolution have not yet matured. But broad intermediate masses, not only in the villages but also in the cities, are being held back by capitalism, lagging entire epochs behind historical development.

The peasant in Bavaria and Baden, who still cannot see beyond the spires of his village church, the small French wine producer who is being driven into bankruptcy by the large-scale capitalists who adulterate wine, and the small American farmer fleeced and cheated by bankers and Congressmen—all these social layers thrust back by capitalism away from the mainstream of development are called upon, on paper, by the regime of political democracy to assume the direction of the state. But in reality, on all the basic questions which determine the destinies of the peoples, the financial oligarchy makes the decision behind the back of parliamentary democracy. Such was previously the ease on the question of war; such is now the ease on the question of peace. To the extent that the financial oligarchy still bothers to obtain the sanction of parliamentary ballots for its acts of violence, there are at the disposal of the bourgeois state for obtaining the necessary results all the instruments of lies, demagoguery, baiting, calumny, bribery and terror, inherited from the

centuries of class slavery and multiplied by all the miracles of capitalist technology.

To demand of the proletariat that it devoutly comply with rules and regulations of political democracy in the final life-and-death combat with capitalism is like demanding of a man, fighting for his life against cutthroats, that he observe the artificial and restrictive rules of French wrestling, which the enemy introduces but fails to observe.

In this kingdom of destruction, where not only the means of production and transport, but also the institutions of political democracy are heaps of blood-soaked stumps, the proletariat is compelled to create its own apparatus designed first and foremost to cement the inner ties of the working class, and to assure the possibility of its revolutionary intervention into the future development of mankind. This apparatus is represented by the Workers' Soviets. The old parties, the old organizations of trade unions, have in the persons of their leading summits proved incapable, not only of solving, but even of understanding the tasks posed by the new epoch. The proletariat has created a new type of organization, a broad organization which embraces the working masses independently of trade or level of political development already attained; a flexible apparatus which permits of continual renovation and extension; and is capable of attracting into its orbit ever newer layers, opening wide its doors to the toiling layers in the city and the country who are close to the proletariat. This irreplaceable organization of working-class self-rule, this organization of its struggle for and later of its conquest of state power, has been tested in the experience of various countries and constitutes the mightiest conquest and weapon of the proletariat in our epoch.

In those countries where the toiling masses live a conscious life, Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are now being built and will continue to be built. To strengthen the Soviets, to raise their authority, to counterpose them to the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie—this is today the most important task of the class-conscious and honest workers of all countries. Through the medium of Soviets the working class

can save itself from the decomposition which is introduced into its midst by the hellish sufferings of war, by starvation, by the violence of the possessing classes and by the treachery of its former leaders. Through the medium of Soviets the working class will be able to come to power most surely and easily in all countries where the Soviets are able to rally the majority of the toilers. Through the medium of Soviets the working class, having conquered power, will exercise its sway over all spheres of the country's economic and cultural life, as is the case at present in Russia. The foundering of the imperialist state, from the Czarist state to the most "democratic" ones, is taking place simultaneously with the foundering of the imperialist military system. The multimillioned armies mobilized by imperialism could only be maintained so long as the proletariat remained obediently under the yoke of the bourgeoisie. The crack-up of national unity signifies the inevitable crackup of the army. This is what happened first in Russia, then in Germany and Austria-Hungary. The same thing may be expected to occur in other imperialist countries as well. The uprising of the peasant against the landlord, of the worker against the capitalist, and of both against the monarchical or "democratic" bureaucracy, inevitably brings in its train the uprising of soldiers against the commanders and subsequently—a deep cleavage between the proletarian and bourgeois elements of the army. Imperialist war, which pitted one nation against another, has passed and is passing over into civil war which pits class against class.

The wails of the bourgeois world against civil war and against Red Terror represent the most monstrous hypocrisy yet known in the history of political struggles. There would be no civil war if the clique of exploiters who have brought mankind to the very brink of ruin did not resist every forward step of the toiling masses, if they did not organize conspiracies and assassinations, and did not summon armed assistance from without in order to maintain or restore their thievish privileges.

Civil war is imposed upon the working class by its mortal enemies. Without renouncing itself and its own future, which is the future of all mankind, the working class cannot fail to answer blow for blow.

While never provoking civil war artificially, the communist parties seek to shorten as much as possible the duration of civil war whenever the latter does arrive with iron necessity; they seek to reduce to a minimum the number of victims and, above all, to assure victory to the proletariat. Hence flows the necessity of disarming the bourgeoisie in time, of arming the workers in time, of creating in time the communist army to defend the workers' power and to preserve its socialist construction inviolate. Such is the Red Army of Soviet Russia which arose and exists as the bulwark of the conquests of the working class against all attacks from within and without. The Soviet Army is inseparable from the Soviet State.

Recognizing the world character of their tasks, the advanced workers have from the very first steps of the organized socialist movement striven to unify it on an international scale. The beginnings were made in 1864 in London by the First International [International Workingmen's Association—Editor's note]. The Franco-Prussian War, out of which emerged the Germany of the Hohenzollerns, cut the ground from under the First International and at the same time gave impetus to the development of national workers' parties. As far back as 1889, these parties came together in the Congress of Paris and created the organization of the Second International. But the center of gravity of the labor movement during that period remained wholly on national soil, wholly within the framework of national states, upon the foundation of national industry, within the sphere of national parliamentarianism. The decades of reformist organizational activity gave birth to an entire generation of leaders, the majority of whom recognized in words the program of the social revolution but renounced it in deeds, becoming mired in reformism, in a docile adaptation to the bourgeois state. The opportunist character of the leading parties of the Second International

has been completely disclosed; and it led to the greatest collapse in world history at a moment when the march of historic events demanded revolutionary methods of struggle from the working-class parties. If the war of 1870 dealt a blow to the First International, disclosing that there was as yet no fused mass force behind its social-revolutionary program, then the war of 1914 killed the Second International, disclosing that the mightiest organizations of the working masses were dominated by parties which had become transformed into auxiliary organs of the bourgeois state!

This applies not only to the social patriots, who have today clearly and openly gone over to the camp of the bourgeoisie, who have become the latter's favorite plenipotentiaries and trustees, and the most reliable executioners of the working class; it also applies to the amorphous and unstable tendency of the Socialist Center [i.e. centrist Socialists] which seeks to reestablish the Second International, that is, to reestablish the narrowness, the opportunism and the revolutionary impotence of its leading summits. The Independent Party of Germany, the present majority of the Socialist Party of France, the Menshevik group of Russia, the Independent Labor Party of England, and other similar groups are actually trying to fill the place which had been occupied prior to the war by the old official parties of the Second International. They come forward, as hitherto, with the ideas of compromise and conciliation; with all the means at their disposal, they paralyze the energy of the proletariat, prolonging the crisis and thereby redoubling Europe's calamities. The struggle against the Socialist Center is the indispensable premise for the successful struggle against imperialism.

Sweeping aside the half-heartedness, lies, and corruption of the outlived official socialist parties, we Communists, united in the Third International, consider ourselves the direct continuators of the heroic endeavors and martyrdom of a long line of revolutionary generations from Babeuf—to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

If the First International presaged the future course of development and indicated its paths, if

the Second International gathered and organized millions of workers, then the Third International is the International of open mass action, the International of revolutionary realization, the International of the deed.

Bourgeois world order has been sufficiently lashed by socialist criticism. The task of the International Communist Party consists in overthrowing this order and erecting in its place the edifice of the socialist order. We summon the working men and women of all countries to unite under the communist banner which is already the banner of the first great victories.

Workers of the World—in the struggle against imperialist barbarism, against monarchy, against the privileged estates, against the bourgeois state, and bourgeois property, against all kinds and forms of class or national oppression—*Unite!*

Under the banner of Workers' Soviets, under the banner of revolutionary struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, under the banner of the Third International—*Workers of the World Unite!*



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